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At fifteen miles we reached a small village called Cumbacum, which either gives a name to the hill fort, or receives one from it. This village was too poor to furnish provisions for even my small party, so we proceeded three miles farther to Kullawood, a more respectable village than any that we had hitherto seen, with a few shops and some good houses. It is subject to the Raja of Calistree, and about three miles from the foot of the mountains.

About seven o'clock the following morning, the guides, huntsmen, &c. were ready to proceed with me to the hill fort. At three miles we reached the foot of the hills, where we were obliged to dismount. There had once been a road for carts, but no traces of it were now to be found; so steep was the hill, that the rain had washed it away. We ascended a broken and stony path for about a mile, when we turned into the thickest part of the wood, to see, as I was told, a very old gun, which had belonged to the Raja, when, as the guide expressed himself, "he was a man." It proved, however, to be an English six-pounder, not older, probably, than the guide himself; and had most likely been employed to dislodge the Mahomedans from the fort after the Raja had ceased to be "a man."

At the second mile we entered the outer gate, in a wall of dry stones, but of large dimensions. The ascent was very difficult for one mile farther, when we arrived at the upper-port wall, of little consequence. If there had been no trees or bushes, the ascent would have been almost impracticable. Here we found a fine table-land, of four miles in length by two in breadth; with a stream of water, the ruins of a garden, palace, and some magazines — all, however, overgrown with wood. The height was about eighteen hundred feet, and the climate ten degrees cooler than the plain. The thermometer was only 65° in the air at eleven o'clock; and 62° in the water in a deep, sheltered ravine. We cannot implicitly trust to report which represents these hills as healthy; but if this be correct, what an excellent retreat during the hot weather, as the scorching winds are said never to blow here. I think that I am the fourth European who has ever been on these hills, although they are at such a trifling distance from Madras; and there is even water-carriage to within ten miles of their base by the Pullicat Lake.

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## VII.—*Arctic Land Expedition.*

THE return of this expedition has thrown a new and extended light over the geography of the north-eastern extremity of America; into the particulars of which, however, we do not propose at present to enter, believing that they will shortly receive more justice

from Captain Back himself. We shall here merely give a few results, and illustrate them with a sketch showing their connexion with our previous knowledge.

Speaking generally, Captain Back's discoveries may be thus classed. He has greatly extended the previously understood limits of Great Slave Lake, and ascertained it to be one of the longest of those magnificent sheets of water which distinguish North America. He has determined the existence and relative position of a series of other lakes which extend from it nearly in a N.E. direction to the sea,—the waters of which, for the first 150 miles, drain to the south, afterwards to the north and east. He has discovered the source, and followed to its termination the stream of a large and often rapid river, which traverses many of these lakes, and of which only the name had before reached us on Indian report. And he has thus found the sea ninety miles south of where Captain Ross believed that he had struck on the north coast of the American continent. His line of coast discovery east and west of this position, from a variety of causes, of which we hope soon to receive from himself the detail, was necessarily a short one; but it was of great importance, as we shall presently show. We shall first trace him up from his commencement in somewhat more detail.

The most easterly land previously known on the borders of Great Slave Lake was a little way to the eastward of Slave River; and was low and marshy. From this Captain Back crossed to the north side of the lake, which he found, on the contrary, high, bluff, and precipitous, of primitive formation, and characterized by a predominant reddish colour, caused by abundance of flesh-coloured felspar. Many small islands are scattered in front of this coast, along which the expedition proceeded to the head of the lake, where it constructed its winter quarters, marked as Fort Reliement.

Here the same mountainous country was found; and it probably circles round the lake in an E.S.E. direction, and there divides the waters flowing into Great Slave Lake from those which fall into Hudson's Bay. Its precise height could not be ascertained, Captain Back having been deprived of both his barometers by accidents on the way; but by his estimate it is not under 1400 feet; which is, accordingly, the height of land between Great Slave and Artillery Lakes. From this it also still ascends, but more gradually, as far as Lake Aylmer, between which and Sussex Lake is the water-shed dividing the rivers which flow to the south and north. The absolute height of this line he considers to be under 2000 feet; but this also is, of course, conjectural.

Sussex Lake is the source of the Thlewée-cho-dezeth,—or, as it is proposed to call it, Back's River; and its first direction is

N.N.E. almost in a right line to Bathurst's Inlet, of Franklin, where, accordingly, Captain Back was for some time sanguine in his hope that it would conduct him. When within sixty miles, however, of this point, it made a sudden turn quite round to E.S.E.; and thus kept him long in extreme uncertainty whether it would bring him out in Hudson's Bay or on the Polar Sea. At length, however, as will be seen on the sketch, it took a decided turn to the N.E.; and its mouth was eventually found in  $67^{\circ} 7'$  N. latitude,  $94^{\circ} 44'$  W. longitude from Greenwich; about ninety miles, as already mentioned, due south of Spence's Gulph, of Ross, and of the coast-line traced from it to the westward by his nephew Captain James Ross.

The view to seaward from this position was very varied. To the east, and almost S.E., the water was perfectly clear and open; with a small island E. by S. fifteen or twenty miles distant. To this quarter, also, the Esquimaux, found near the mouth of the river, pointed as being the site of Acoollee,—a name which, some of our readers will recollect, was given to Sir Edward Parry by the Esquimaux in Hecla and Fury Strait, as designating a place S.W. from him;—(and the inference seems to us, in consequence, irresistible, that the sea thus seen by Captain Back was actually the southern extremity of Prince Regent's Inlet.) To the N.E. were water and sea, with what is called a water-sky beyond them. Due north were two blue objects which looked like large islands; and N. N.W. was a clear icy horizon, with every appearance of a passage in that direction to the westward, the tides and a strong current coming up from it, (the latter corresponding exactly with the current found by Sir Edward Parry down Hecla and Fury Strait,) and drift-wood, and the vertebræ of a whale, lying on the beach opposed to it. The extreme point of the continuous land to the westward bore N.W., and appeared to be a bluff of considerable height, the termination of a chain of mountains, the line of which seemed to be about N. N.W. and S. S.E. Their altitude was conjectured to be above 1000 feet; and their formation to be primitive, resembling that of the whole country traversed by the Thlewée-cho. Fragments of limestone were found along the coast, but none *in situ*. The banks of the Thlewée-cho were chiefly granite and sand.

These latter particulars have the more interest as they appear to be important considerations in balancing the probabilities for and against any part of Captain Ross's discoveries being continental. On this head, however, we shall now endeavour to bring together all the elements on which a conjecture either way can be founded; and with this conclude.

With regard to the peninsula of Boothia itself, there seems very little room for doubt. The reasons are stated above which seem

to make it certain that the Thlewée-cho actually issues in Prince Regent's Inlet, so that Boothia can have no connexion with the main to the eastward; and as Captain Back's westernmost land, Cape Richardson, in  $68^{\circ} 45' N.$ ,  $96^{\circ} 22' W.$ , is thus fifty miles S.W. of the most westerly ascertained point of the land with which Boothia is immediately connected, with tides and a current still coming up along it from the N.N.W. it seems impossible to conceive that it can turn round within so small a space, and join the other, without Captain Back becoming cognizant of the circumstance. The only doubt seems to be whether this point may not be connected with Ross's western land, south and west of Maty Island, on the outer face of which Captain James Ross's farthest is marked; and to this point, therefore, our statements will now apply.

When Captain James Ross passed from Boothia to this land, or rather when he returned, his Esquimaux assured him that the deep bay south of Maty Island was closed at the bottom with low land; beyond which, as he conceived in a westerly direction, they stated that there was the sea, thereby giving him the idea that beyond his farthest to the westward the land fell back in a deep gulph. But he did not himself see this supposed bottom of Poetess Bay, as Captain Ross has called it; and in his Chart it is, accordingly, marked with a dotted line, as resting solely on Esquimaux authority. He is now, therefore, of opinion that it does not exist as so delineated; but that the west coast of this bay is continuous with Back's western land, the low Isthmus of which the Esquimaux spoke as having the sea beyond it being in the line of this continuity. And his reasons for this supposition are in substance the following. 1. He considers the distance between the most southerly point on this line which he himself ascertained, and Captain Back's Cape Richardson, (which does not exceed thirty to thirty-five miles,) to be too small to admit of a navigable passage between them; and that there is from time to time a navigable, or at least an open passage to where Back stood, seems demonstrated by the drift-wood, and other rack, found by him on the shore. 2. That there is, however, open water in the summer season in Spence's and Poetess' bays, he conceives proved by the different character of the ice in the two successive winters that he visited them. 3. His Esquimaux were so specific in their statements regarding an Isthmus in this direction, that he cannot believe them to have been altogether mistaken. 4. They even mentioned a large river to him as existing in the S.E. from it; but he was chained to the spot by difficulties of transport, and not at the moment aware of the possible value of such a discovery.

These are, we think, all the reasons which have been suggested for this view of the direction of the land, beyond where Back left

it ; and though the arguments opposed to it, we confess, appear to us to have more weight, we shall state them with equal brevity.

1. The marked difference already adverted to between the geological characters of the two lands in question (Captain Ross's being limestone) would not of itself, perhaps, afford a strong presumption against their continuity ; but it is a powerful auxiliary to others. 2. Captain Back's Cape Richardson, though not, of course, so far to the westward of the west, as of the east side of Poetess Bay, is yet decidedly west of both ; yet along it the current still came from the N.N.W. 3. Captain James Ross found no drift-wood along his line of coast, which is scarcely compatible with the supposition that what Captain Back found had come along in front of it. 4. What Captain Back found was so fresh, and little sodden with water, as to burn freely when ignited, which does not look as though it had been brought along a twisted, tortuous passage, as one round Maty's Island would be. Lastly, Captain Back did not actually reach Cape Richardson, but he was sufficiently near it, and, as he thinks, in sufficiently favourable circumstances, to have seen any prolongation of it to the N.E. ; but his impression is, on the contrary, that the land beyond it falls back to the N.W.

The balance of presumption seems, then, in favour of this supposition ; and the whole of Captain Ross's land, supposing it correct, becomes insular. But we by no means consider this point quite certain ; and it is only fair to add, that the doubt involves no question whatever of the faithfulness of his report of what he saw, but merely of the correctness of his conclusions from the premises before him. It is beyond all doubt that he believed he was on the main land of America ; and it is only to be regretted that the difficulties under which his most excellent and indefatigable scout, Captain James Ross, always laboured when separated by a considerable tract of land from his ship, (at one time suffering from want of provisions, and always without a boat,) made it impossible for him to do more than he did. That he most unwillingly submitted to the imperfect examination of Poetess Bay is on the face of his Report, published long before Captain Back's return gave peculiar interest to its investigation.

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SKETCH  
shewing the Route of the recent  
ARCTIC LAND EXPEDITION.

1835.





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of the recent  
EXPEDITION.

